

Remarks

This is in response to the non-final Office Action mailed on January 18, 2005. Claims 30 and 45 are amended. Support for the amendments to claim 30 can be found, for example, at page 8, lines 28 and 29 and at page 11, lines 12-18 of the present application. Claims 30 and 32-45 remain pending in the application, with claim 30 being the only independent claim. Reconsideration and allowance are requested in view of the following remarks.

I. Interview Summary

Applicants' representative, Robert A. Kalinsky, interviewed the present application with Examiner Yoon by telephone on February 1, 2005. Applicants appreciate the courtesy extended by Examiner Yoon. During the interview, claim 30 and Moore et al., U.S. Patent No. 3,752,679, were discussed. Agreement regarding the allowability of the claims was not reached.

II. Preliminary Comment Regarding Claim 30

The Examiner interprets the recitation in claim 30 of less than about 25 % by wt. inorganic fiber to read on references not including any inorganic fiber (i.e., 0 % by wt. inorganic fiber). Claim 30 recites that the composition comprises an inorganic fiber. Claim 30 is also amended to recite that the composition comprises inorganic fiber in an amount sufficient to be bound by the inorganic binder during the compression molding to form the article. It is therefore respectfully suggested that claim 30 does require the presence of inorganic fiber.

III. Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 30, 32, 36-38, and 40-45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Moore et al., U.S. Patent No. 3,752,679 ("Moore '679"). This rejection is respectfully traversed, and the correctness of the rejection is not conceded.

Claim 30 recites a composition comprising less than about 25 % by wt. inorganic fiber in an amount sufficient to be bound by the inorganic binder during the compression molding to form the article.

The rejection concedes that Moore '679 fails to disclose or suggest an inorganic fiber. Therefore, Moore '679 fails to disclose or suggest a composition comprising less than about 25

% by wt. inorganic fiber in an amount sufficient to be bound by the inorganic binder during the compression molding to form the article, as recited by claim 30.

Reconsideration and allowance of claim 30, as well as claims 32, 36-38, and 40-45 that depend therefrom, are therefore respectfully requested.

IV. Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 30, 32, and 36-45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moore '679. This rejection is respectfully traversed, and the correctness of the rejection is not conceded.

For at least the reasons provided above, Moore '679 fails to disclose or suggest a composition comprising less than about 25 % by wt. inorganic fiber in an amount sufficient to be bound by the inorganic binder during the compression molding to form the article, as recited by claim 30. Reconsideration and allowance of claim 30, as well as claims 32 and 36-45 that depend therefrom, are respectfully requested.

V. Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 33-35 were noted as being allowable. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's assistance in identifying allowable subject matter. All claims are in condition for allowance.

VI. Conclusion

Favorable reconsideration in the form of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney with any questions regarding this application.

Respectfully submitted,
MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.
P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-0903
(612) 332-5300

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By: Matthew A. Doscotch
Name: Matthew A. Doscotch
Reg. No.: 48,957
MAD/RAK